

(c) Yes, Sir. The Indian Council of Small Industries vide its representation dated 27-7-2000, has, among other things, urged that the present reservation policy should be strengthened and made more effective and meaningful. The issue of reservation/dereservation of items for exclusive manufacture in the SSI sector is examined on continual basis by the Government and decisions in this respect are taken after considering all relevant aspects.

(d) The Government has put in place several measures to help the small scale sector become globally competitive. These include special focus on areas such as technology upgradation, infrastructural assistance through cluster approach, timely availability of credit, adoption of modern management practices, use of electronic infrastructure and other Information Technology applications, marketing and timely information dissemination, including sensitization of small industries to the emerging challenges of trade liberalization.

Miserable condition of KVI

3408. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the miserable condition of the Khadi and Village Industry artisans and reported decision of "Khadi Mission" to close down all KVI Institutions from August 1 to 8, 2000, under protest, as per news-item published in the Hindustan Times dated 27th July, 2000;

(b) whether production of Khadi has been reduced to 50 per cent due to non-payment of rebate claims and other incentives as well as throwing out of employment of four lakh Khadi artisans;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what remedial steps Government have taken so far on their Memorandum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI

[25 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The Khadi Mission in the letter to its member institutions had inter alia informed that all the Khadi Bhandars shall be kept closed from 1st to 7th August, 2000.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Khadi rebate policy for the current financial year has already been declared on 1.6.2000. Regarding payment of rebate claims, adequate funds have already been provided to the KVIC. Financial assistance by the banks is provided to the institutions on the basis of the ISEC issued by the KVIC, which in turn is based on the performance of the institutions.

Agreement with an American Company to take satellite photographs

3409. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in an agreement signed with an American Company, "Space Imaging", the Department of Space, India has permitted the former to take satellite photographs and to manage their sale and distribution;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Defence and army authority in India had expressed grave reservation about this measure, which in their opinion, would compromise national security; and

(d) if so, under what compelling circumstances was the objection from the defence authorities overruled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, an agreement is under finalisation between Antrix Corporation of Department of Space with "Space Imaging", a US Company for regulating the dissemination of 1 Mtr. Spatial resolution data from IKONOS satellite.